

REVIEWS

LIVE!!

UPTOWN TOP RANKING

THE LOO'S
RICHARD HELL & THE VOID-OIDS.
the CLASH.

1977

STYLE

BIRMINGHAM TOP RANK.

As you know this was the first gig ever to take place at the brand new re-opened Top Rank (the in place to be for the over 25's don't you know) and as I walked down Dale End to the gig it was obvious things were not as they should be.

A queue stretched right back up to the ramp on the Oasis markets, and round the entrance to the hall a large group of trouble-makers nick-named by the evening Mail.. Policemen.

The queue was moving at snails pace and not suprisingly because at the door potential fans were first harrassed by Police, then if they looked under 18 told to 'clear off' without a word of explanation or even being told about refunds, (and if your a 14 year old kid £2 is a lot of money) the looks on the faces as they were thrown out was one of complete despair, I mean can you imagine saving for a month, waiting for a month and then being told you can't see the band because you're not old enough???

Then if you braved that lot on entering the doorway all fans were forced to put any badges, safety pins, chains, studded wristbands or belts, bondage straps, and even some earrings into a bucket. No tickets just sling 'em all into a bucket and collect them afterwards.

Some of the safety pin/badge brigade were stood there about half an hour undressing themselves under the eyes of the security gaurds.

An extremely irritated Dave Corke muttered "it's a police purge" under his breath again and again as he imagined the band getting through the outside melee. It seems more than a little co-incidental to me that the Police should take such an action on the Clash date considering at the other Top Rank gigs there has been very little hassle. But then again we all remember the debacle at the Rag Market don't we.

A Police purge is no understatement.

Inside the relative sanctuary of the hall all was not exactly hunky dory either. True it's quite a good venue, with a balcony for those who prefer to watch from above, but the stage is a ridiculous height about three feet high, no wonder the kids have to jump up and down, they can't see the band.

So at the front of the stage were some dirty big steel crash barriers which can't have been much fun to be trapped against I'm sure.

Anyway trying to forget all these harrassments and onto the gig.

The Loo's a french female quartet were on first and as most of the crowd were still outside didn't recieve much support. They played some nice music though and from outside in the foyer I didn't know the records had stopped playing.

Richard Hell arrived half way through the set with Micky Jones and Joe Strummer, and he looked pretty cool. Onstage though I'm not sure. He certainly wasn't as powerfull as on record but the enjoyment was there even when he started (and lost) a spitting contest against the crowd. He went down quite well though and the encore was definitely demanded.

For those in the crowd who had never seen Spizz in action it must have bbeen quite a shock, indeed many of them pogoed frantically thinking it was the Clash. They played a short set including Bowies 'Queen Bitch' and 'Hang on to Yourself', Spizz is great in small doses and although on this occasion there was a bit of trouble with the gear, it was a great build up for the Clash.

'We want the Clash' chanted the crowd as the new back-drop was unveiled, and as usual they charge on straight into 'London's Burning' The crowd of course go wild as they steam through 'Complete Control' and '1977' and the band especially Nicky Haddon are on great form

The CLASH

CONT.

Every three or four numbers the band take a rest, and each song even the new ones sends the crowd back into action. Suddenly during Police & Thieves stage power goes, Joe acts the idiot screaming while Nicky carries on drumming and the bemused crowd sway back and forth. Power is eventually restored but they never really seem to pick it up again and what could have been a really great gig fades with four tracks from the album.

Of course they're still great and the encores 'Whats My Name', 'White Riot' and especially 1977' are as exciting as usual, I don't know if it was the gig or what but in my opinion they weren't a patch on the superb Max 'White Riot' tour.

"WE'RE GOING TO A PARTY.....
A PUNKY REGGAE PARTY."

After the gig all the liggers assembled upstairs, for an unexpected party. Dave Corke had a hell of a job organizing things, and making sure that those without tickets (us) got in o.k.

Censored was out in force with Tracy, Marc, Lynne and Ian looking as good as ever. I don't really want to go into too much detail 'cos if you want you'll know what a good time we had and if you didn't you'll only be jealous. Don Letts was d.j. and guest stars included a couple of Prefects, The Slits, some Subway Sect, some Void-Oids but no Richard Hell, The Killjoys, a host of Birmingham party goers Steve Gibbons oh! and four quiet guys called Strummer, Jones, Hoaddon and Simonon, who just stood in the corners admiring the dancers (in the main the Birmingham contingent and Arianna) and having a quiet drink. Mind you they seemed to enjoy it and we certainly did (especially the pork pie). The hassle at the door seemed a long way away but for those who didn't get in it was very real. Rumours are that they may play Barbs again soon which would be nice especially if they have another party. (Thanks Dave). TOM

HAS ANYONE GOT A COPY OF: 'LIVE AT MAX'S KANSAS CITY' OR THE DILLINGER V TRINITY ALBUM ENTITLED 'CLASH' WHICH THEY WOULD LIKE TO EXCHANGE FOR A VAST SUM OF MONEY IF SO PLEASE PHONE 429 2412. NOW.

ALBUMS

ULTRAVOX: Ha! Ha! Ha! (ISLAND)

This album's been on my turntable quite a lot recently and I still haven't got tired of listening to it. Kicking off with the single 'Rockrock' they go through a variety of styles which up to the superb 'Distant Smile'. And after just side one it's clear that they have made a great step forward from the 'Ultravox!' album. That album (although good) sounded just a little too much like early Bowie/Roxy Music whereas on Ha! Ha! Ha! they seemed to have developed much more of their own 'sound'. This is especially noticeable on side two, where the band really come into their own. Final track is 'Hiroshima Mon Amour' which contains Sax from Chris Cross that wouldn't have disgraced 'Low' and if you still want some more information then this should be enough BUY IT.-Ultravox should have been huge in '77 they weren't but this time next year we shall see. TOM.

SHORT REVIEWS CONTINUED.

DAVID BOWIE: Heroes. (RCA)
IGGY POP: Lust For Life. (RCA)

These two albums have both been around for quite a bit now and I suppose especially in the case of Heroes if you are going to buy it you already will have. Bowie was in a difficult situation his previous album 'Low' was brilliant I can't praise it enough the style was unique and just right to satisfy all his fans and convert some more. I still haven't decided about Heroes it's another masterpiece sure but I'm still completely mystified by what he might do next. Lyrically streaks of 'Alladin Sane isms' and musically just as varied as ever. A good album but I'M still listening to Low. Now Lust For Life does impress me especially after a slightly disappointing concert. The title track, 'The Passenger' and 'Turn Blue' being my favourite tracks. If you like Bowie you'll love this, better still buy it for any Bowie fans Christmas present and you won't be forgotten. TOM.

...SINGLES...SINGLES...SINGLES...SINGL

Just space to mention three singles which you must get GENERATION X: Wild Youth if only for the Dub which if nothing else will make the Clash think a bit love it. PENETRATION'S Don't Dictate hit me when I first hit me another good band on Virgin, finally A.T.V.' How Much Longer' acc.